

HERESY OF ROT

By Levi Combs and John McGuire

Source of Madness



HERESY OF ROT



Author

Levi Combs
John McGuire

Project Manager

Edwin Nagy

Art Director

Casey Christofferson

Cover Artist

Quentin Soubrouillard

Interior Art

Sid Quade
Hector Rodriguez
Adrian Landeros
Colin Chan

Cartography

Robert Altbauer

Cover design

Ainsley Christofferson

Layout & Interior Design

Lysanne Hudon

5^e Developer

Edwin Nagy

Development Manager

Michael Gross

©2022 Necromancer Games. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. Necromancer Games, and the Necromancer Games logo, Heresy of Rot is a trademark of Necromancer Games. All rights reserved. All characters, names, places, items, art, and text herein are copyrighted by Necromancer Games. The mention of or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.



Necromancer Games is:

Bill Webb, Zach Glazar, Edwin Nagy, Mike Badolato,
Casey Christofferson, Jeff Harkness, and Ken Spencer

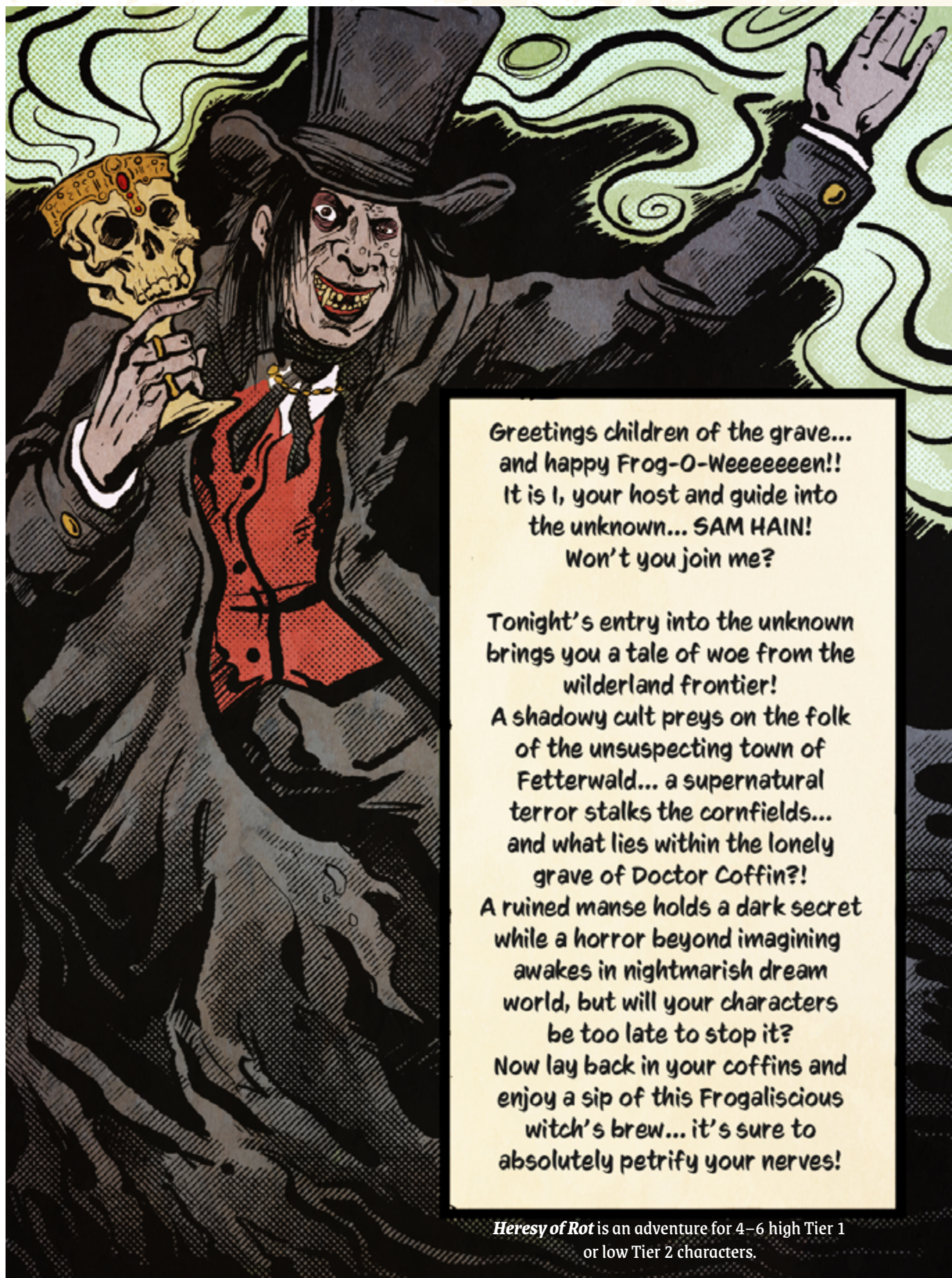
ISBN: 978-1-6656-0477-2
5^e PDF



Table of Contents



The Story So Far	2	The Death Waltz	15
Adventure Summary	2	Second Floor of the Manor	16
Adapting This Adventure	3	<i>Area 8. Second Floor Hallway</i>	16
Getting Started	3	<i>Area 9. Children's Bedroom</i>	16
Fetterwald Wandering Monsters	3	<i>Area 10. Master Bedroom</i>	16
Encounters	3	<i>Area 11. Hester's Bedroom</i>	18
Bad Omens	4	<i>Area 12. Jedidiah's Office</i>	18
Part 1. Fetterwald,		Attic	18
The Town That Dreaded Tomorrow	5	Examining Jedidiah's Journal	19
Notable Inhabitants	6	Part 4. The Lonely Grave of Doctor Coffin	20
Starting Play	6	The Void Between	21
Talking to the Sheriff	6	Part 5. A Nightmare Come to Life	22
<i>What's Going on Here?</i>	6	The Whispering Cornfield	23
<i>The Horseman? Who is That?</i>	7	<i>Properties of the Whispering Cornfield</i>	23
<i>Why Don't You Just Flee During the Day?</i>	7	Part 6. The Fate of Fetterwald Unfolds	24
<i>Jedidiah? Who is that?</i>	7	Consequences and Further Adventure	25
<i>Why Haven't You Done Anything</i>		Appendix 1: Magical Items	26
<i>About These Disappearances?</i>	7	<i>The Bone Planchette of Doctor Coffin</i>	26
<i>Who is Behind This?</i>	7	<i>Harvester of Sorrow</i>	26
<i>They're Not Friendly? What Makes You Say That?</i>	7	<i>Hat of the Medium</i>	26
Rumors at the Pipe and Pint	8	<i>Horseman's Signet Ring</i>	26
Rumors	8	<i>Mask of Fecundity</i>	26
Part 2. Shadows in the Moonlight	9	Appendix 2: Monsters and Hazards	27
Part 3. The Secret of Blight Manor	10	Pumpkin Cultist	27
The Manor Grounds	11	Heresy of Rot Cultist	27
<i>Area 1. The Stairs</i>	11	Horseman	28
The Cross Family	11	Pumpkinhead Creeper	28
<i>Area 2. The Front Yard</i>	11	Rot King	29
<i>Approaching the Entrance</i>	11	Rot Zombie	30
First Floor of the Manor	12	Tombstone Elemental	30
<i>Area 3. The Foyer</i>	12	Umbral Steed	31
<i>Area 4. The Staircase</i>	12	Whistling Jack	31
<i>Area 5. Dining Room and Kitchen</i>	13	Witchlight Seeker	32
<i>Area 6. Cellar</i>	13		
<i>Area 7. Library/Parlor</i>	14		



Greetings children of the grave...
and happy Frog-O-Weeeeeeeen!!
It is I, your host and guide into
the unknown... SAM HAIN!
Won't you join me?

Tonight's entry into the unknown
brings you a tale of woe from the
wilderland frontier!
A shadowy cult preys on the folk
of the unsuspecting town of
Fetterwald... a supernatural
terror stalks the cornfields...
and what lies within the lonely
grave of Doctor Coffin?!

A ruined manse holds a dark secret
while a horror beyond imagining
awakes in nightmarish dream
world, but will your characters
be too late to stop it?

Now lay back in your coffins and
enjoy a sip of this Frogaliscious
witch's brew... it's sure to
absolutely petrify your nerves!

Heresy of Rot is an adventure for 4–6 high Tier 1
or low Tier 2 characters.



The Story So Far



Heresy of Rot begins in the small town of Fetterwald, a neglected settlement that has seen better days. Once a trusted watering hole for those headed north, it now seems to be gradually fading away. Ranches stand derelict and abandoned, while the cornfields and woods have grown wild and thick with no axe to cut them. Many of Fetterwald's homes and storefronts are in general disrepair, and its once lush fields have gone to seed. The whole town has an air of desolation, as if it's simply one bad season away from complete abandonment.

While hardship has surely come to Fetterwald, things were not always this way. In days past, caravan masters and travelers remember it as a friendly, viable stopover point to rest, resupply, and find a cold mug of ale. So why the abrupt change?

Recently, a shadowy cult known as the Heresy of Rot set its sights on the folk of Fetterwald and began preying on them. It started at the close of harvest during the month of Blotmund (the Lost Lands' equivalent of October), with a handful of travelers disappearing off the road north. As the new year wore on, more folks began to inexplicably vanish. Woodcutters refused to

go into the nearby forest, and fisherman stopped going to the river for fear of being snatched. Strange, bulbous gourds began to grow along the roadsides — only to be found rotting and filled with fungus when cracked open. Now, many folks are fleeing as rumors grow of shadowy figures in ghastly-looking masks stalking the cornfields and nearby woods. Those who stayed now live in abject fear of being snatched away in the night.

The characters arrive in Fetterwald as the hysteria reaches a fever pitch. Just this week, a terrifying figure known as the Horseman appeared on the open roads heading north and south. A black-clad figure astride a gaunt, shadowy steed with flaming eyes, the Horseman bars the way and keeps anyone from venturing too far from Fetterwald. Those who dare to confront him are cut down like wheat and never seen again.

Who is the Horseman, and does his sudden appearance mean doom for the entire town? Who are the shadowy figures stalking the woodlands? Can the characters uncover exactly what is happening in Fetterwald before its citizens disappear forever, leaving it just another ghost town along an old, haunted road?



Adventure Summary



Once a prosperous settlement, Fetterwald has fallen on hard times thanks to a terrible mistake made by one of its most prominent citizens, the machinations of an evil cult, and the presence of a powerful force from beyond the pale.

Isaac Cross (known locally as Doctor Coffin, elder of the well-to-do Cross family) accidentally opened a portal to a strange demiplane known as the Void Between using a magical witchboard he created to peer into the realm of the dead. Instead of simply looking, he inadvertently attracted the attention of a terrible being known as the Rot King, which immediately set its sights on the light and warmth of this new world. The Rot King summarily dispatched agents of the Heresy of Rot — its nefarious cult — to investigate this new revelation.

The cult quietly staked its claim in the nearby woods after the final harvest of Blotmund, then quickly moved to abducting lone travelers and locals. These unfortunate souls were taken into the Void Between for the Rot King to consume so it could slowly but steadily grow stronger. The remains of these victims transformed into monstrous beings under the Rot King's control. Some became powerful agents such as the Horseman

and Whistling Jack, while others transformed into pumpkin-head creepers. These monstrosities slowly bled over from the Void Between and into the countryside around Fetterwald.

As Winterfyll (and the close of the next harvest season) approaches, the Rot King demands more sustenance. The Heresy of Rot now has designs on the entire populace of Fetterwald, and the Rot King consigned the Horseman to make sure no one gets out alive. The Rot King seeks power so it can pull everyone and everything in Fetterwald into the Void Between, merging the two disparate worlds. If successful, this could create a parasitic bond that might ultimately threaten the entirety of the Lost Lands!

Characters who question the locals and confront the Horseman may uncover clues to locations in and around Fetterwald. Secrets can also be unearthed at Blight Manor, and terrors may be faced in the outer dark. These scenarios should lead to the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin, and from there into the decaying realm of the Void Between. Once there, they may confront the Rot King and its unearthly minions, possibly ending the reign of terror in Fetterwald forever.

Adapting This Adventure

This adventure can be used in any low- to mid-magic fantasy setting with a small, out-of-the-way settlement like Fetterwald. It is situated on a lonely trade road, far from kingdoms of proud knights or bastions of mighty magic. It is late in the year, and All Hallows' Eve approaches, with the colors of the forest changing and the leaves beginning to fall in anticipation of winter.

Heresy of Rot is set in an isolated area (as all the best horror stories are), and you are encouraged to weave tension and mystery

into the narrative as the game progresses. The characters should quickly realize that no help is coming, and that they may be the only thing standing between Fetterwald and the sinister forces of the outer dark. Themes of isolation and despair should define the atmosphere of this adventure. The dire situations characters find themselves in are exacerbated by the lurking horrors threatening to consume the entire town.

Getting Started

Characters may enter Fetterwald for all sorts of reasons.

"Just last season we unloaded all our wares. ... Where is everyone?": The characters hire on as caravan guards, and their final stop is Fetterwald. The caravan master is visibly upset as the usual turnout of locals does not appear, and nearly half the merchants with whom he trades are no longer present. What happened to the town?

"Evil has a grip on that town, my son. ... They need help.": Dark portents and strange divinations hint at something terrible happening in Fetterwald. The party's cleric is asked to investigate what happened (along with any companions, of course). No cleric in the party? A friendly cleric kindly offers to pay the characters for their time.

"What happened to these poor people?": As the characters wander along the road, they discover evidence of a recent attack. Crows pick at the headless corpses, and a quick examination reveals that these were locals from the nearby town of Fetterwald. Their belongings were left behind, but their heads are missing. Their wounds show that their necks were severed with a sharp blade. Who is responsible for this senseless brutality?

"Dolnor should have returned more than three weeks gone by now. I fear what has befallen him.": A friend of one or more of the characters is missing near Fetterwald. The Cross family (see **The Secret of Blight Manor**) is good for this scenario, as they are important figures in the town and victims of recent foul play.

"The deed is yours, young master, but beware — there is more than meets the eye at Bright Manor ...": One of the characters (or perhaps the party) inherits or come into ownership of the deed to Bright Manor (now referred to as Blight Manor by the locals). They've come to Fetterwald to claim the mansion.

Fetterwald Wandering Monsters

The woods, hollows, and fields around Fetterwald are more dangerous than ever with the arrival of the Heresy of Rot and the Rot King. Dark things are drawn to its otherworldly presence and infest the outlying territory.

When a wandering monster is indicated, either through your decision or by rolling a 1 on 1d6, roll 1d8 or simply pick from the following list. Many of the creatures in the table can cast bad omens on the characters. If this is the case, see the **Bad Omens** sidebar on the next page for more information on these curses.



Encounters (1d8)

1 **Granny Grindelwick:** A bent, wicked creature from the old world but still no ally to the Rot King, Granny Grindelwick (as chaotic neutral human **mage** with a *broom of flying* and *potions of gaseous form*, *giant strength* (frost), *invisibility*, and *mind reading*) looks the part of a classic witch complete with

pointy black hat, a crooked warty nose, and a flying broomstick. Bloodypaws, her black **cat** (with 10 hit points and is a fiend rather than a beast) familiar (who does indeed leave tiny, bloody footprints wherever she goes), is never far behind. She is most likely to lay a trap for the characters or to simply attack them, but if offered a gift and treated with respect, she may instead cackle loudly and impart a cryptic but much-needed piece of information. If attacked, she defends herself but attempts to escape on her *broomstick of flying*, cursing the characters with a bad omen as she departs.

2 Shadows (equal to the number of characters): As the characters move through a shaft of moonlight or otherwise pass from darkness into the light, their own shadows suddenly animate and attack! Anyone who manages to slay their own shadow activates a bad omen and no longer casts a shadow for 2d4 days. Only one bad omen per character can occur from this encounter.

3 Choir of Ghostly Children: A small group of 3d6 + 3 children robed in white gowns are softly singing religious hymns in an otherwise abandoned space (a field, side of the road, a hilltop, etc). They are heard long before they are seen. When the moon shines directly on them, the odor of smoke and burning flesh fills the air, and they are revealed to be bony, blackened abominations standing in a burned-down ruin. If attacked, they erupt in a tiny column of flame and burn out in a single round, leaving cinders swirling behind in the air and imparting a bad omen. If carefully approached, they may impart a clue or information (which is left to your discretion). If the area is searched, the remains of a church, shrine, or schoolhouse of some sort can be found. The structure burned down many years ago.

4 Pumpkinhead Creepers^{A2} (1d4): Former travelers or residents of the town who were taken by the Heresy of Rot and fed to the Rot King, these creatures wandered astray and crossed over into the lands of the living from the Void Between. Without the guidance of their master, they wander aimlessly.

5 Mol Hatchett, the Ghostly Hitchhiker: A former resident of the town who departed on a wagon train in search of a bigger, better life outside of Fetterwald, Mol Hatchett was slain by bandits on the road south. In the handful of years since her demise, many have reported seeing a ghostly figure shadowing them in the mist. If confronted, Mol doesn't attack but instead imparts some sort of cryptic information to the characters (which is left to your discretion). If attacked, she imparts a bad omen and dissipates into wisps of fog, tittering wildly.

6 Heresy of Rot Cultists (1d4 + 1)^{A2}: These vile beings are hunting for another unfortunate soul to offer to the Rot King. If captured and interrogated, they are all clearly insane and won't willingly give up much information, but magical means can be used to extract information from them. All of them bear *masks of fecundity* (skull).

7 Elwin Tol, Escaped Beggar: This poor soul once wandered from town to town, working odd jobs and begging for food and shelter. He was attacked by the Heresy of Rot and fed to the Rot King, but somehow escaped. In his panicked flight, he inadvertently crossed back into the land of the living from the Void Between. Unfortunately, the Rot King fed too deeply and for too long, so now Elwin has only a few ragged breaths left. This is an excellent opportunity to impart knowledge of the Rot King and the Void Between (which Elwin refers to simply as "that other place"). If the characters somehow save Elwin (**commoner**), they may remove the effects of one bad omen.

8 The Spectral Door: A haunting of unusual nature, this spectral portal appears as a normal wooden door on reinforced hinges but is always found in a place no one can remember having a door before. It appears on the side of a building, inside a corridor, or even at the base of an old, gnarled tree. The door is always the exact size needed for whoever discovers it to enter. The door is never locked. Entering the door is easy, but a one-way experience. Once entered (by one or multiple characters), it closes behind all who cross through and disappears. In this adventure, the spectral door leads to one of the following locales (roll 1d6): 1–3. Your choice of a location in **Fetterwald**; 4. **Blight Manor**; 5. **The Lonely Grave of Doctor Coffin**; 6. **Whispering Cornfield**. Any attempt to dispel or destroy the spectral door fails and results in a bad omen.

Bad Omens

Doom has come to Fetterwald as Wynterfell approaches. A bleak hour is close at hand!

A bad omen is imparted on a character when an event tainted by evil or the supernatural (or both!) occurs. These specific events are found throughout the adventure.

The effects of bad omens are as follows:

Number	Result of Bad Omens
One	The next saving throw by a character is made with disadvantage.
Two	The next saving throw by an afflicted character automatically fails.
Three or more	The character is unlucky and automatically fails their next saving throw. All friendly creatures within 30 feet have disadvantage on their next saving throw.

Bad omens are hard to shake. Spells and effects like *remove curse* may remove them, but a *dispel magic* (or its equivalent) cannot. Otherwise, the only way to rid oneself of a bad omen is to ride out its effects.

Part 1. Fetterwald, The Town That Dreaded Tomorrow

Fetterwald is a town that has seen better days. While it has not fallen into ruin like so many other border settlements, a palpable air of lingering fear hangs over it. Because of the machinations of the Heresy of Rot and the sudden appearance of the Horseman, Fetterwald feels doomed ... and the folk who live there reflect it.

The town has a stout wall of cut timbers around it but there are no guards to speak of left to reinforce the partitions. The roads are unpaved, packed dirt along a scenic but wild countryside. The buildings are maintained as best the local folk know how, though a few have a ramshackle appearance that lead many to believe the town is full of yokels and bumpkins. In the past, many caravan masters considered it a stopover town, which allowed fresh supplies, new faces, and rumors of the greater world to filter in. It has endured wars, raids, and other conflicts over the years, but the survivors always rebuilt their home.

Population: Including the families in the outlying farms and along the southern road, the folk of Fetterwald number no more than 350. Almost all are human, with a smattering of other races living in the surrounding territories. With the coming of the Heresy of Rot, the loss of the entire Cross family, and the exodus of Fetterwald's citizens, the town numbers only half its normal size when the adventure begins.

Economy: Farming and produce are the chief trades for a small town like this, bolstered slightly by local fishermen, trappers, and hunters. Loggers must travel farther afield so as not to deplete the local timber supply, but in doing so they generate a good source of income for the town. Expansive cornfields dot the landscape, along with personal gardens containing all manner of vegetables.

Until recently, the simple folk of Fetterwald looked to trade for superior tools, spices, and handiworks not readily available. This practice has stopped as any general notion of commerce has ground to a standstill.

Law: Peace in Fetterwald is maintained by the sheriff, who also holds the unofficial title of mayor. Thurlan Yar (or simply "sheriff" or "mayor" depending on who is addressing him; he uses the stats of a **thug**) oversees the day-to-day troubles of the town and is called on only when a dispute rises and requires some sort of intervention. At one point, Thurlan could muster 40 or 50 poorly armed folk during times of need, but since the Heresy of Rot began preying on the town, this number is only about a dozen individuals. Thurlan is aghast at the town's recent troubles and was totally unprepared for the doom that befell Fetterwald. With the loss of Jedidiah Cross (and the monetary patronage his family brought to town), Thurlan has become skittish and unbalanced in his duties.

Lore: Most of Fetterwald's lore is steeped in its founders, all of whom were woodsmen and tradesfolk who leapt at the opportunity for a life along the frontier borderlands when it was offered. These "old families" now form the backbone of Fetterwald's insular society. Family names such as Cross, Barlowe, Chatham, Hatchett, Abbot, and Bibber are still found locally as well as among the tombstones of the town's graveyard.

Two local legends stand above the town's day-to-day superstitions: Blight Manor and the Devil's Crossroads. Both are described in greater detail elsewhere, and from a young age, every child in town learns these tales.

Society: The folk of Fetterwald are used to living quiet lives. They are superstitious and easily wowed by displays of magic. These superstitions make their way into everyday life and often determine the outcome of day-to-day decisions.

Notable Wizards: No wizards are in Fetterwald, but Isaac Cross (the family patriarch of Blight Manor) possessed powers and abilities far beyond those of a normal practitioner of medicine. The townsfolk refer to him as Doctor Coffin, as he was the hamlet's doctor as well as its mortician. When deep in their cups, some locals even say he could call forth the dead and command them to do his bidding!

Blight House also has a reputation for wizardry among the locals. For as long as it's been there, rumors of magical treasures squirreled away inside its walls have existed.

Notable Guilds: Due to the town's small size, no guilds are found in Fetterwald. The only thing that came close were the assorted mercantile concerns who occasionally stopped over in the town. After Fetterwald's latest troubles, these caravans likely do not return unless it recovers from the flight of its citizens and the machinations of the Heresy of Rot.

Notable Temples: Fetterwald is not known for its temples. A small chapel to Mitra burned down several winters ago but was never rebuilt. Observances are made by many, but there is no centralized place of worship.

Notable Inns and Taverns: One tavern in town also serves as an inn of sorts, at least enough to keep one's head out of the rain. The Pipe and Pint offers simple fare at low prices and a place for the locals to bang their mugs together after a day of hard work. The tavern is owned and operated by a small halfling family (one of the few in the area) and is well-known for the local stout — *Rumbutter's Dark* — which has become a staple of the town.

Notable Inhabitants

Thurlan Yar (Human, LN **thug**): Doubles as the sheriff and mayor; a good man who has been overwhelmed by the calamitous times Fetterwald is undergoing; though he has become skittish as of late, Thurlan is still willing to do anything he can to save the town.

Albus Bibber (Human, NG **scout**): Local woodsman, tracker, and trapper; has seen evidence of the Heresy of Rot in the surrounding woodlands; lost his oldest son to their depredations; it wouldn't take much to convince him to lead an armed patrol (such as the characters) to where he believes the Heresy of Rot is located.

Reb Rumbutter (Halfling, LG **commoner**): Proprietor of the Pipe and Pint; moved his family to Fetterwald with a small inheritance to open his inn; he is courteous and proper but not nearly as superstitious as other townsfolk.

Ammi Hatchett (Human, LE **commoner**): A petty and mean-spirited old man who has never been quite the same since bandits killed his daughter years ago; last holdout on a farm to the north of town, the rest of his family fled; local rumors of a ghostly figure along the southern road (matching the description of his lost daughter) have driven him to drink heavily.

Obed Chatham (Human, N **commoner**): Former caretaker of Blight Manor, now living his last few years as quietly as possible; can speak at length on the history of Fetterwald and the manor, including its darkest days. If Thurlan Yar gifts the characters with the fake deed to the manor, Obed can confirm its illegitimacy and may even relate that Jedidiah Cross kept the deed hidden somewhere in the manor. Under no circumstances will he accompany characters to the manor, saying "The light in the house has been snuffed out. Naught but darkness resides there now."

Starting Play

As the characters arrive in Fetterwald, they can immediately tell the town has seen brighter days. Thin wisps of smoke issue from only a handful of chimneys, and many of the storefronts are boarded up. Only a scattering of people stroll the streets, and those who do seem nervous and put upon by the characters' arrival.

The wagon master — a large-bellied, mustachioed man named Onen Var (as **noble**) — remarks:

"Well, this is unusual, quite unusual indeed. Normally when we pull into town, all the children rush the wagons looking for treats or a peek at what we're hauling. The merchants come to see the wares, and familiar faces are everywhere. It's all smiles. But this? I've never seen it like this. Something must have happened."

Questioning townsfolk on the streets doesn't amount to much, as they're either too nervous or literally run away from anyone who approaches them. Doors slam shut, and window shutters close, latched from the inside. The folk appear anxious, act unusually inhospitable, and go out of their way to avoid the characters. If confronted, intimidated, or cornered, locals say they don't want any trouble and recommend visitors see the sheriff.

The sheriff's house and the Pipe and Pint are two places to uncover information about what happened in Fetterwald.

Talking to the Sheriff

Sheriff Thurlan Yar (as **thug**) lives in a simple-looking, one-room log cabin inside the town walls, with a front porch and pens for goats and chickens. An old horse (some might call it a nag) is tied to a post out front. Wooden steps lead up to a porch, and a rack of antlers hangs over the door. If characters approach, Thurlan steps onto his porch, warily eying them. As long as the characters don't attack and are relatively peaceful, Thurlan speaks with them.

Below are some responses Sheriff Thurlan might give to specific questions. You'll need to judge for yourself what else he might know based on the adventure or what the characters ask.

What's Going on Here?

"It started last season, with those Chatham boys missin' down by the river. Their Pa swore something dark happened to them and spent every day out in the woods searchin'. One day he didn't come back either. It's just gotten worse since, with folks disappearin' and all. The Cross family had the worse of it, what with the family dying and Jedidiah disappearin'. Now, half the town has fled for their lives, and the other half ain't got anywhere else to go. We can't even leave if we wanted to, what with the Horseman and all."

The Horseman? Who is That?

"He appeared on the road south not too long ago, when the Barnhouse and Childers families pulled up stakes. He barred the way and refused to let anyone pass. They say ole Johan charged in to get him off the road but got a hatchet to the head for his troubles. Since then, the Horseman's appeared every night. If you watch from the gate, sometimes you can see his lamp in the darkness. Those who have gotten close and managed to tell the tale say he has no head!"

Why Don't You Just Flee During the Day?

"The closest settlement is Floodbottom, and that's days away. These folks aren't getting caught out on the open road by themselves ... not in this wild country. Things are afoot in those woods that are almost as terrifying as the Horseman."

Jedidiah? Who is that?

"Jedidiah Cross, a wealthy patron of the town. His family has lived in Fetterwald for generations. Locals called his pappy 'Doctor Coffin' behind his back, seein' as how he was not only the town's doctor but the mortician, too. That old manor up on the hill, there? That's Bright House, though folks around here have been callin' it 'Blight House' after the family took sick and Jedidiah disappeared. The whole town used to go up there for celebrations, supper, and whatnot, but no one goes there anymore. ... Somethin' ain't quite right about it now ..."

Why Haven't You Done Anything About These Disappearances?

"What can I do? When folks started to come up missin', we rounded up a posse and several search parties. We looked in every holler and game trail, every field up to Old Man Pittney's orchard ... and came up with nothin'. As the year passed, more and more folks vanished, and now I don't have the men, even if I could convince any of 'em to go back into those woods."



Who is Behind This?

"Aside from the Horseman, there ain't many clues. Strange folks are out in the forest and hills now, arrived after last year's harvest. Lots of people seen 'em from afar but none up close ... and they ain't too friendly. Albus Bibber found a strange thing out near the Teetering Woods, but no one can make heads or tails of it. Some kind of mask. Looks to be carved from a big ole piece of fungus. I reckon it belonged to one of them."

At this point, Thurlan produces a *mask of fecundity* (skull) that was lost, dropped, or otherwise misplaced by an agent of the Heresy of Rot.

They're Not Friendly?

What Makes You Say That?

"Like I was sayin', folks started seein' them in the hills and woods after last year's crops came in. ... It was a good harvest. Since they showed up, the fields have slowly been wastin' away. Whole farms just gone to seed. We got nothin' to show for this year's harvest 'cept for some sickly rows of corn and what folks bring in from their private gardens. Everything outside these gates it shot through with rot. Surely y'all seen it on your way into town? Now, I ain't one of them learned, pointy-hat fellers from Bard's Gate, but it can't be no coincidence they showed up just as things went to hell."

If the characters present themselves as anything short of dismissive (and especially if they're the kind of individuals who go about armed and wearing armor), Thurlan begs for their help and pleads with them to rid the roads of the Horseman. He also mentions the mysterious folk seen in the nearby woodlands, but only as an aside. In his mind, the clearer and most pressing threat comes from the Horseman.

Not much is in the town's treasury (especially since nothing is being brought in for harvest and taxation is at an all-time low), but he offers a pittance of 25 gp each to anyone willing to end the threat to the town, along with deeds to land along the north road. At your discretion, local families may contribute to the potential reward. If this still does not move the characters, Thurlan offers a fake deed to Bright Manor; the real deed is hidden in the manor. He tells the characters the manor will be theirs if they dispatch the Horseman and end the threat to the town. He knows the deed is fake but hopes it entices the characters to help him if he has exhausted all other offers.

Should characters agree to confront the Horseman and investigate the disappearances, Thurlan hands over the *mask of fecundity* and bids them to talk to Albus Bibber, a local woodsman whose son was one of the first to disappear. Thurlan gives the characters whatever information and assistance he can.

Rumors at the Pipe and Pint

A local watering hole and inn, the Pipe and Pint serves as a place for locals to grab a quick bite to eat, throw back a few mugs of cold ale, and tell tall tales deep into the night. With the coming of the Horseman and the town's hysteria ready to boil over, the tavern is one of the few friendly spots in Fetterwald.

Owned and operated by Reb Rumbutter (**commoner**), the tavern is a good place for local news and rumors. Reb is a halfling transplant to Fetterwald who brought his family here for a better, quieter life.

If the characters converse with Reb or buy a round of drinks for the tavern's few customers, wary stares and tight-lipped scowls eventually melt into free-flowing talk about local happenings and the world at large. This is especially true if the characters seem eager to help or have already spoken with Thurlan Yar. In addition, Albus Bibber is most likely here, drowning his sorrows. He may be persuaded to speak with the characters.

If successful, have the players roll 1d8 to determine what the tavern's regulars tell them about Fetterwald and the surrounding environs.

Rumors (1d8)

1 Idle Caskets, Empty Graves: As of late, someone in Fetterwald has been robbing graves. More than a dozen plots have been unearthed, and their occupant's remains taken. To what nefarious purpose, the locals shudder to think.

2 That Old Place, Up There on The Hill: Blight Manor was once known as Bright Manor, until the Cross family mysteriously died off, one by one, and its patriarch Jedidiah Cross disappeared. Now, it is a derelict ruin, and locals never stray onto its grounds. Many claim that Jedidiah's grandfather was secretly a sorcerer and that the manor is haunted, but the truth remains uncertain.

3 Faces in the Mist: When the night fog rolls in and a chill in the night air, some of the lamplighters reported strange happenings near the gate to the southern road. One even swore he'd seen a trio of ghostly figures evaporate into the fog.

4 The Phantom Rider: A shadow-clad rider atop a large, gaunt horse began plaguing the town not more than a fortnight ago. Many who sought to leave were turned back, and those who pressed on were never seen again. One survivor claims the rider had no head! They call him "The Horseman." Fetterwald's residents would forever be indebted to anyone who puts an end to this deadly phantom rider.

5 The Witching Hour: On certain nights, when the moon is high and the veil between the living and the dead is at its thinnest, strange happenings are afoot near the Devil's Crossroads.

6 The Long Night: Every night at the stroke of midnight, time seemingly slows to a crawl and with each passing day, the witching hour seems to grow ever slightly longer. Tom Havernaught, the town drunk, swears that, until the sun rises, Fetterwald is almost an hour behind Floodbottom, the next town over. As the weeks press on, nights last so long that it seems the next sunrise may never come.

7 Beware the Open Road: Several families tried to leave Fetterwald during the day, making for the town of Floodbottom several days to the south. The road is long and winds through treacherous territory that one doesn't venture into lightly unless armed and in numbers. Though the Horseman is terrifying, creatures lurking in those woods would give even the stoutest adventurers pause.

8 The Blackest of Masses: A very old and terrible witch known as Granny Grindelwick lives in the wild hills north of Fetterwald, cursing those who cross her path and stealing babes from their cribs. However, if one catches her eye during the quiet hush of the midnight hour, she is said to bestow boons and precious baubles on those she takes a liking to. Her cat Bloodypaws is never far, leaving tiny, bloody footprints wherever it goes.



Part 2.

Shadows in the Moonlight

If the characters agree to confront the Horseman on the town's behalf, they have a few options. They know the Horseman cuts off any escape from the surrounding area and that he appears only after the sun goes down. At this point, they can either travel along the road to find the Horseman, or they can set an ambush during the day and wait for night to fall. Either way, the Horseman does not appear until it is dark.

When the Horseman arrives, he materializes out of the fog in the following manner:

Night has fallen, and a low fog rises from the ground. A crisp chill is in the air, and the road is bathed in shifting shadows that play tricks on you in the moonlight. The surrounding thicket is oddly quiet, and the road stretches out before you. Up ahead, in the darkness, you suddenly hear the neigh of a horse followed swiftly by the galloping of hooves. Emerging from the fog-shrouded darkness, an ominous rider clad all in black approaches. He rides a gaunt but powerful-looking steed. The Horseman! He wheels his mount about, turning to the side as the stallion kicks its front hooves into the air. From this new angle, you see he clutches the reins in one hand and a glowing, orange orb in the other. The orb appears to be pumpkin that blazes with an eerie witchlight.

If approached, the **Horseman**^{A2} remains seated while his mount, a rotting, glistening beast resembling a large warhorse (an **umbral steed**^{A2}), stamps its feet and aggressively paces from one side of the road to the other. He takes no direct action until the characters are less than 30 feet away, at which point he hurls the glowing **witchlight seeker**^{A2}, which attacks anyone who doesn't flee with wild abandon. The Horseman follows up by charging the characters and swinging his *harvester of sorrow*^{A1} hand ax.

As the witchlight seeker streaks toward the characters, read the following:

The glowing orange orbs streaks toward you with a bloodcurdling scream. As it moves, wide, staring eyes open all along its surface! It abruptly halts in midair, then quickly whirls and darts about with a purpose all its own. It unleashes a volley of glowing, pinpoint beams from its many eyes.

The Horseman, his umbral steed mount, and the witchlight seeker can fight independently of each other or team up to concentrate their efforts on single foes. Typically, the Horseman attempts to ride down and trample melee foes while simultaneously attacking with his ax. His mount reserves its breath weapon until an opportune moment arrives or combat becomes dire. The witchlight seeker fires its numerous magic rays at spellcasters and other dangerous foes as needed. As puppets of the Rot King, none of them gives any quarter and fights until they are destroyed.



If the Horseman's remains are searched, he is found to be wearing large but nonetheless human-sized studded leather armor and a tattered, soiled cape. He carries no treasure aside from his magical ax and a curious-looking signet ring emblazoned with the sigil of Jedidiah Cross, the deceased patriarch of the Cross family. The Cross family were the former residents of what is now known as Blight Manor, and if the ring is shown to anyone in Fetterwald, they immediately recognize it. The ring functions as a *ring of protection*.

Close examination of the Horseman's remains by a local (such as Thurlan Yar or Albus Bibber) unearths a stunning revelation: The Horseman was Jedidiah Cross! If this is true, then why did he suddenly turn on the town he loved for so long ... and what happened to his head?

In truth, Jedidiah was ambushed in his own home and died in the attic at the hands of the Heresy of Rot. His remains were fed to the Rot King in the Void Between, where he was reanimated and became a powerful servant of evil. His head was placed in the cellar of Blight House. As the Horseman, he was sent to Fetterwald to keep its citizens from fleeing, so that all might be consumed as the hamlet is slowly pulled into the Void Between to be devoured by the Rot King.



Part 3.

The Secret of Blight Manor

Blight Manor wasn't always the ruin it is today. Only a few months ago it was known as Bright Manor and inhabited by the locally renowned Cross family. It initially was known as Bright Manor because of its stature atop Stutterford Hill above the rest of the town. Jedidiah Cross (the patriarch of the family) was renowned for his generosity and often lit a candle in the attic window, which shone like a beacon to let the townsfolk know they were invited to come by for a spot of fun, food, and fellowship.

Several months ago, tragedy befell the Cross family as they mysteriously took ill and passed one by one. The children were the first to go, followed by the rest of the family. In the end, Jedidiah was attacked in the manor by the Heresy of Rot, who slew him and ultimately transformed him into the Horseman

through the powers of the Rot King. With the family's death and Jedidiah's "disappearance," the manor quickly slipped into darkness. Not long after, locals began calling it Blight Manor.

The manor is now haunted by the spirits of the Cross family and the many tragedies that befell them there. This haunting has caused the manor to have decayed at an unnatural pace, shot through with dry rot, cobwebs, and filth. If the characters gained any information about the manor, they know it should not have deteriorated this much in such a short time. However, if characters banish the haunting (through magical means or by lighting the candle in the attic), it returns to its former appearance in a matter of days.

Blight Manor is styled after an American Gothic household featuring two floors, an attic, and crumbling, gambrel rooftops.



It sits atop a lonely hill with a staggered four-tier, stone staircase leading to the front walkway. Its previous vibrant emerald hue has faded to a sickly pallor, and its windows are thick with unnatural grime. The stone staircase rapidly crumbled and is suddenly home to weeds and ivy. What little grass is left on the property has yellowed and thatched, with a foul odor dancing through the breeze.

The Manor Grounds

The following locations are found inside Blight Manor. Many of the areas are affected by the haunting affecting the manor, which causes the structure and the grounds to appear run-down and crumbling.

Area 1. The Stairs

Cracked stone steps lead up to the manor in a four-tiered pattern, doubling back as they climb the hill. Weeds, thickets, and ivy have taken hold in the stairs, threatening to consume them. Ahead, you hear the rhythmic banging of a lone shutter slapping against a window. As your foot crosses the threshold to the stairway, the banging stops. The silence is jarring.

The Cross Family

Members of the Cross family included:

Jedidiah,
the patriarch of the
family; son of Isaac
and Hester.

Gwendoline,
matriarch and
Jedidiah's wife.

Issac,
grandfather;
known to townfolks
as Doctor Coffin.

Hester,
grandmother and care-
taker of the children.

Thomas,
son of Jedidiah
and Gwendoline.

Astrid,
daughter of Jedidiah
and Gwendoline.

The stairs are unusual only in that they seem to have fallen into disrepair very quickly judging by what the townsfolk told the characters about the manor. This is due to the haunting that has taken hold of Blight House.

Area 2. The Front Yard

The grass is sickly, yellowed, and grows sparsely in many places. The remnants of a once-grand rose garden rests to one side, now overgrown and filled with weeds and thorns.

Blight Manor's yard was once the talk of the town, and its attached rose garden was a source of great pride for Gwendoline Cross. But just as the manor has fallen into ruin, so have her once-impressive roses. Because of the haunting, the garden quickly became overrun with thickets, wilted, and faded to black. The soil seems odd, and a foul odor wafts from it.

The terrible odor from the garden is an affront to the characters' senses. All characters within 30 feet of the decaying garden must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or begin retching uncontrollably. Affected characters are poisoned for as long as they remain within 30 feet of the garden.

Approaching the Entrance

Once proud and dignified, the manor has fallen into disrepair and rot. The old roof sags, and the floorboards have warped and decayed. A trellis runs along the east and west sides of the manor, now wild with thorns. All but a single windowpane is blacked out with the filth of passing years, with the attic window being the only clear pane. Even from the ground, you can see a lonely, unlit candle at the window.

Two sets of double windows are on each side of the manor. Because of the haunting, the windowpanes all bear the same filthy grime, making them impossible to see through. Thanks to old sorceries laid down by Isaac Cross, the windows are all under the influence of *arcane lock* and cannot be breached or broken through normal means.

The trellis is suspect at first sight but seems to hold if pulled upon. It is climbable and easily navigated thanks to the ivy and thickets snaking their way through it.

A small front porch with a collapsing roof and broken floorboards adorns the exterior, with a soiled armchair and loveseat rotting away on the porch. Anyone examining the loveseat should make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. If successful, they discover a skeleton key that opens all doors within the manor. If they fail, the porch collapses under their weight, dealing 1d4 points of damage to everyone on the porch but also revealing the skeleton key.

The front door was once a grand-looking affair but is now rotted and covered in peeling paint thanks to the haunting. Directly above the handle is a tarnished brass lock fashioned in the shape of a rose blossom. This lock may be opened only by touching it with the *horseman's signet ring*^{A1}, opening it with the skeleton key (found in the loveseat nearby) or by breaking it down with a successful DC 25 Strength check.

If the front door is opened, read or paraphrase the following:

A loud, distinct click echoes across the yard as the door to Blight House is breached. The once grimy windows all fade to light, returning to their normal appearance as the filth caked upon them disappears into thin air. The light of a candle flickers ahead, and you smell sulfur as if a match had been struck. Glancing across the threshold, a hallway stretches before you, distorting your vision and momentarily throwing you off balance.

This has no immediate in-game effect but might alert characters that they have crossed some sort of unseen boundary into the unknown and are now active participants in the haunting.



First Floor of the Manor

Area 3. The Foyer

Open and spacious, this foyer looks to be the heart of the house. Wallpaper peels in long tears away from the wall, and cobwebs caked in filth litter every scone and molding. A once-fine rug stretches the length of the front door down the hallway. The entire chamber reeks of mildew.

Nothing unusual is in the foyer, but it does allow access to most areas within the manor.

Area 4. The Staircase

This staircase is grand and elaborate, with long, wide steps, and the banister is intricately carved with flourishes. It leads directly to the second floor before narrowing to continue to the attic. The stairs are slightly warped and caked in dust. The banister leans outward as if it could come loose at any moment. A door is at the heel of the staircase.

A door at the heel of the staircase leads to the cellar (**Area 6**). It has a lock that appears identical to the one on the front door of the house, fashioned like a bouquet of roses. It is locked, but the *horseman's signet ring*^{A1} or the skeleton key can open it. It can be broken down with a successful DC 20 Strength check.

Should characters take the staircase to the second floor, they find that it rattles and shakes with each step. The shaking is mild at first but becomes more violent with each additional Medium or larger character who steps on it. The stairway cracks beneath the weight of the third Medium character, forcing everyone on the staircase to succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or fall through the stairs. Characters who fall land on the basement steps below, and end up twisting and falling down them, taking 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage from the fall. Characters falling in this manner begin the next round in the prone position. If the stairs collapse, they can still be carefully traversed by maneuvering around the hole.

If any character fails their saving throw, jump to the encounter with the **rot zombies** in the cellar (**Area 6**), which occurs directly after the characters fall through the staircase.

Area 5. Dining Room and Kitchen

Directly to the left of the staircase, this chamber appears to be a large dining room running almost the full length of the manor. A long bar against one wall is filled with old bottles and decanters now covered in dust and cobwebs. Numerous tables and chairs are scattered across the room, some of them still containing assorted plates, dishes, and ewers.

At one time, the Cross family held large feasts and invited the citizens of Fetterwald to dine with them on special occasions. This chamber is long abandoned but one of the tables still contains a very nice crystal decanter (35 gp) that seems to have escaped the ravages of time.

The bar is filled with old bottles of wine and spirits that have long-since expired. Among them are three peculiar-looking bottles fashioned in a style that seems very out of place for the manor. Each bottle contains a different liquid: the first is a *potion of fire breathing*; the second is a *potion of healing*; and the third is a *potion of poison*. Should a character drink the poison, they immediately take 1d6 poison damage and continue taking 1d6 poison damage each round thereafter until the effect is neutralized (with *protection from poison* or a similar method) or they die.

Area 6. Cellar

Stairs descend into the darkness of the manor's cellar, giving way to a faint candlelight somewhere beyond the bottom. An awful stench of mud and fecundity assaults your nostrils. As you descend, you get a better look at the cellar and discover a floor covered in sludge. Wine racks once lined the walls but have tipped over, cracking bottles and smashing glass everywhere. Ale barrels line one wall but seem to have been tapped, their contents emptied.

At the far end of the cellar, you see a ghoulish sight: an eyeless, rotting head atop a pile of plump, orange gourds. The gourds have been crudely carved to resemble jack-o'-lanterns. A strange haze of spores floats through the air, surrounding this macabre sight.

The family and their servants meticulously kept this cellar, which possesses everything needed to run a household consistently hosting guests. The southern end was a wine and ale cellar with the finest selection of spirits this side of Bard's Gate. Jedidiah also favored it as a space where he could sneak away to smoke a pipe or have a private conversation while manor functions were in full swing.

If characters enter the cellar and examine the room's contents, they awaken the unquiet spirits of Blight Manor. The mud bubbles and churns as four amorphous shapes rise from the filth covering the cellar floor. As they shamble forth, the sludge falls from their bodies to reveal rotting corpses. In the fading candlelight, the faces of an older woman, a younger woman, and two children can be seen. Their mouths are distended in torturous, silent screams. These 4 **rot zombies**^{A2} attack any living creature they see.



Defeating the rot zombies and putting them to rest removes one bad omen from any character who participates.

A search of the room reveals the following:

- ✎ The severed, rotting head sitting atop the pile of gourds belonged to Jedidiah Cross. It was placed here by the Heresy of Rot after he was slain in the attic. His body was taken to the Rot King where he was reanimated as the Horseman.
- ✎ The rotting corpses contain nothing of value, but if the journal from Jedidiah's office (**Area 12**) is read, it can be summarized guessed that these are the remains of Gwendoline, Hester, Astrid, and Thomas.
- ✎ The gourds are the rotting remnants of fruiting bodies taken from the Void Between and placed here by the Heresy of Rot. The spores that drift about them are harmless but serve as a storytelling device for you to connect the presence of the rot zombies to the Void Between when the characters travel there later in the adventure.
- ✎ Almost all the wine and spirits were destroyed or are otherwise ruined. However, if a character actively searches through the mud, they discover a single bottle of *Chateau Lafite Bowbe* from a famed vintner in Bard's Gate worth an estimated 800 gp.

Area 7. Library/Parlor

Unlike the rest of the manor, this chamber is very much intact. Shelves stretching from floor to ceiling are filled to the brim with books of all shapes and sizes. A grand-looking piano in one corner is surrounded by numerous stringed and woodwind instruments. The piano is missing its front leg and several keys are gone, which leaves it looking like a broken-toothed smile. A large window overlooks the back property, with a large, cobweb-covered desk resting in front of it. A large fireplace is against the wall.

This library housed the once-impressive collection of the Cross family. The books are a first-rate selection from all over the Lost Lands and cover a variety of different subjects ranging from alchemy to zoology. Though most of the collection suffered at the hands of the haunting, it is nonetheless astounding in its scope.

Characters searching the library discover the following:

- ✎ A casual examination of the bookshelves reveals the words "Winterfyll Ven" deeply scratched into various places on the shelves. The locations of the scribbings don't seem to have any rhyme or reason to them. Characters understand





The Death Waltz

Choose (or determine randomly) a single character examining the desk. This character notices the air around them growing colder and their breath becoming foggy. Within this moment, a hazy visage materializes in the mist of someone very dear to the character. Only that character experiences this haunting. To everyone else, the character seems to merely be looking off into the distance for a few moments.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As your breath crystalizes before you, a spirit clad in the finest fashions of yesteryear appears. Your eyes meet and for a moment you are unable to avert your gaze. They are simply radiant, even in death. They move toward you in the blink of an eye, until they are standing before you. Suddenly, music reverberates across the chamber and you see broken instruments rise and play on their own. The room illuminates around you as they step forward, crack a gentle smile, and whisper, "Dance with me, my love."

The character encountering this haunting must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. Regardless of the outcome, the character is taken on a wild dance through the parlor that only they experience. As mentioned before, no one else perceives what they are experiencing until the results of the saving throw are determined.


If the saving throw is successful: The spirit gently caresses the character's cheek and thanks them for the dance before disintegrating into stardust. Any other characters in the room see the spirit for a few seconds before it disappears. The *bone planchette* of *Doctor Coffin*^{A1} is left behind in the character's hand.

If the saving throw fails: The music becomes unnervingly loud and out of tune. The affected character finds that they are unable to break free of the spirit's frozen grip. The ghost and its victim waltz a danse macabre about the parlor. At this point, the dancer is jerked violently into the air and tossed around by unseen hands. The other characters witness the character being tossed about like a ragdoll through the air.

As this occurs, the haunting drains 10 hit points from the character each round that the death waltz continues. The only thing that can stop the dance

(and the draining effect) is if the haunting is ended with a magical effect (such as *remove curse* or *dispel evil*) or if the instruments are destroyed. Nine different instruments are in the room, and each one has 1d4 hit points.

Regardless if the character dies or the haunting is overcome, the *bone planchette* of *Doctor Coffin*^{A1} is left behind, clattering loudly to the floor.



the word "Winterfyll" in the Lost Land's equivalent to the month of November. This is a notable clue that will come in handy if the characters investigate the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin (see **Part 4**).

- 👁️ A deep (and laborious) examination of the books on the shelves eventually reveals a single *spell scroll* hidden between two large tomes. It contains the spell *locate creature*.
- 👁️ The piano and assorted instruments are all in rough shape, and some appear dry rotted with broken strings. If the haunting is banished, the piano and instruments are revealed to be of high quality and worth full market price.
- 👁️ If characters gaze out the large window overlooking the back property, one of them (your choice) notices the moonlight unnaturally illuminating a path into a cornfield adjacent to the yard. Moments later, this phenomenon disperses as if it never happened. If examined, this path leads to the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin (see **Part 4**).
- 👁️ Any character searching the desk may fall victim to the death waltz, a potent and unusual haunting (see **The Death Waltz** sidebar).

Read the following if the characters investigate the fireplace found in the parlor.

The brick fireplace is blackened and long cold. A portrait above the mantel portrays what you can only assume is the Cross family. It features a young couple standing behind two children — a boy and a girl. An older woman sits on a chair to one side beside a tall man dressed all in black with a top hat and a sinister look in his sunken eyes. He is missing his right arm. The portrait is masterfully painted and has blacks so deep you feel as if you are staring into an abyss.

This portrait features Jedidiah and Gwendoline Cross, along with Hester, Astrid, and Thomas. Standing behind Hester and slightly off to one side is Isaac, once known locally as Doctor Coffin. The painting is unnerving in its execution but not haunted or inherently magical. If characters already encountered the haunting in the cellar (**Area 6**), they recognize the similarities between the bodies and the people in the portrait.

All characters in the room who succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check discover an additional clue. Poking up from the ashes of the fireplace is the charred spine and front cover of a book. This book is burned to a crisp, and the only legible letters found on the bottom of the front cover are “Veniens.” Much like the scratched words into the bookshelves, this is a notable clue that could come in handy if the characters investigate the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin (see **Part 4**).

Second Floor of the Manor

Area 8. Second Floor Hallway

Typical in function, this area leads to numerous other rooms on the second floor. A wobbling, rotting banister surrounds the stairs and looks entirely unstable.

Nothing of real interest can be found here, though it should be noted that the banister can't support weight leaning or resting upon it. Any character doing so must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. Failure results in a fall to the first floor, inflicting 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage. Subsequently, the character must make a second saving throw — this time at a DC of 15 — or take an additional 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage as they fall through the floor and plunge into the cellar (**Area 6**). Characters falling through the first floor begin the next round in the prone position. If the characters have not previously encountered the haunting in the cellar, it occurs at this time.

Area 9. Children's Bedroom

Once a well-appointed bedroom for children, the furnishings appear to have fallen to the ravages of time and are now water damaged and moldy. Two small beds are against the far wall with a small nightstand and a candlestick against them. A half-moon-shaped rug is on the floor, bunched up at one end. Wallpaper featuring whimsical images of animals and fairy tales peels from the walls while underneath, words have been scratched deeply into its surface. Various children's toys litter the floor, and an unusually large pile of porcelain dolls — cracked and filthy — sit against one wall.

If investigated, the following is revealed:

- ☞ The pile of dolls is an unnerving sight, as their cracked and dirty visages stare unblinkingly up at the characters. No matter where they seem to go, the characters feel as if the dolls' eyes follow them. If the characters approach within a few feet of the dolls, a haunting immediately takes effect. The room suddenly expands and contorts into an unreasonably long, odd shape, leaving approaching characters frightened unless they make a successful DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. A character who fails this saving throw stumbles backward out of the room and tumbles over the rotting banister in

the hallway. This fall inflicts 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, and the character must make a subsequent DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take an additional 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage as they fall through the floor and plunge into the cellar (**Area 6**). If the characters have not previously encountered the haunting in the cellar, it occurs at this time.

- ☞ Any character falling into the cellar is visited with a chilling vision from the haunting. When the dust clears and they look upward from their prone position, they see dozens of unblinking painted eyes gazing down on them. One by one they disappear back into the darkness of the bedroom on the landing above, followed by the sounds of the door slamming. Other characters who have not fallen do not perceive this.
- ☞ On the walls where the wallpaper has peeled, the word “Ignis” is scratched into the wood hundreds of times in a small, childlike script. This is another notable clue that aids the characters in their investigation of the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin (see **Part 4**).
- ☞ Searching the desk reveals a small, unlocked wooden box containing two locks of hair, one from each child in the Cross family. It also contains an ornate piece of jade shaped like a stag (255 gp).
- ☞ The rug is nothing out of the ordinary, but it does conceal something of interest beneath. Any character capable of casting arcane spells instantly recognizes it as a *magic circle* meant to ward off bad spirits. The painted sigil is useless now, smudged in numerous places. At one time, Isaac Cross secretly placed it here to help shield his grandchildren from the house's encroaching evil. Ultimately, this precaution failed.

Area 10. Master Bedroom

As you enter this well-appointed bedchamber, an unusual sensation of loss and sorrow sweeps over you. The feeling is palpable, as a sense of loss and endless tragedy replays again and again. A frigid draft howls through a cracked windowpane on the far wall to ripple the curtains of a large canopy bed dominating the room. An armoire, two nightstands, and a collapsing ottoman are scattered about in varying degrees of condition. A moldering, frayed rug covers most of the floor, and the sconces on the walls are covered in wax stalactites from the candles melting over their drip pans.

Like the rest of the estate, this room was once filled with expensive comforts but is now dilapidated by the haunting. Examining the chamber reveals the following:

- ☞ The canopy bed is in a state of disrepair but appears sturdy. A casual visual inspection of the bed reveals a human-sized charred spot on the mattress that radiates outward on the sheets.
- Touching the bed activates a haunting that causes the curtains to animate and attempt to drag the character onto the

bed. The character must make a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be grappled, an illusory effect that only they can perceive. Other characters only see the character examining the bed in an otherwise normal fashion.

If the saving throw fails, read or paraphrase the following:

The curtains lunge forward from the canopy, wrapping themselves around your wrists and ankles, and drag you onto the bed. Blankets slide over your body, ruffling all the way to your chin before clamping tightly down around you. As you lie trapped, flames suddenly erupt around you. The bed is on fire! With every passing second, the flames threaten to engulf you.

The fire is not real but an effect of the haunting. A trapped character has a single round to break free from the bed before the flames engulf them. A character may attempt to break free each round by making a successful DC 18 Wisdom saving throw to realize that the haunting is not real.

If the saving throw is successful: The character manages to untangle themselves from the curtains and escape the bed.

If the saving throw fails: The character takes 10 psychic damage each round as they believe they are burning alive. The haunting persists until either a saving throw is successful, the character dies from the psychic damage, or the bed takes a total of 30 points of damage, which results in it being destroyed. Any character consumed by the psychic damage dies and their body bursts into flames in front of their companions, wholly consumed in a single round.

Multiple characters can be affected at the same time by this haunting. Each character affected perceives it the same way, as if they are the only ones being burned alive.

- If the area under the rug is searched, the characters find sigils meant to act as a *magic circle*. The sigils match the one in the children's room (Area 9). The sigils are also ineffective, as they were smudged and broken at some point in the past.

- Gwendoline kept her clothes and jewelry in the armoire. It was turned on its side and thoroughly ransacked. Any character searching it finds the remains of a finely drawn picture of a smiling Jedidiah standing in the back yard of the manor with Isaac Cross, the man in the black top hat. Isaac's left hand points toward the cornfield. If characters look at the picture a second time or attempt to show anyone else, the man in the black top hat disappears from the drawing, as if he were never there.

- This ottoman is rotted and broken. Its cushions are slashed open and the stuffing ripped out as if someone were frantically looking for something. Characters searching the ottoman can make a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check to find a hidden catch toward the rear. This catch unlocks the top and reveals a chamber containing some wedding gifts given to the Cross family: a finely sewn, bejeweled shawl (285 gp), a silk *sash of protection* (as *ring of protection*), and an ornate fur hat fashioned from the pelt of a dire wolf from the Great Akadonian Forest (210 gp).

- The vanity table's drawers were ransacked, and all but one was yanked free of the table. A handful of items from Gwendoline's jewelry collection are in the remaining drawer, including a string of pearls (50 gp) and a silver hand mirror (35 gp). The mirror is cracked but someone wrote the word "Winterfyll" in the dust on it. Characters understand the word "Winterfyll" as the Lost Land's equivalent to the month of November. This is another notable clue that could aid the characters in their investigation of the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin (see **Part 4**).



Area 11. Hester's Bedroom

This room is fairly spartan compared to the rest of the manor. An old, wooden rocking chair sits next to a mirrored dresser, which is lit by the soft glow of the moon. A small bed sits at an awkward angle, pushed up against the southern wall.

A haunting begins the moment characters enter the room. The old rocking chair begins to noticeably tip back and forth, rocking gently at first but becoming increasingly frantic as seconds pass. As the chair's rocking reaches a crescendo, a tall, shadowy figure wearing a top hat literally steps out of the full-length mirror and points to the window on the southern wall.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The entire house shakes as the shadowy figure points to the south. In a bellowing, spectral voice from beyond, a hoarse voice screams, "Gooooo!" The shadowy figure fades into fleeting shadows, and the house slowly ceases to rock. As you regain your senses, the rocking chair flies through the air as if thrown by unseen hands. It smashes to pieces against the wall.

The shadowy figure is a ghostly imprint of Isaac Cross, who appears to direct characters to the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin (see **Part 4**). It does not harm the characters and attacking it bestows a bad omen upon the one doing so.

Area 12. Jedidiah's Office

At the end of the dark hallway rests an office furnished with a large mahogany desk, a high-backed chair, and a wall-to-wall bookshelf. A mattress and chamber pot have been dragged here, and a small collection of blankets, books, and other items are next to them. This room appears to be unusually orderly ... and feels oddly safe in contrast to the rest of the manor.

This was Jedidiah's office. Examining the chamber reveals the following:

- Anyone looking through the doorway who makes a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check notices numerous faded runes and glyphs painted onto

the doorway and the walls. They also see a thin swath of dried blood running across the runes and ending at the bookshelves. Though faded, the glyphs are neither altered nor disturbed. They are similar to the *magic circle* sigils found in the children's room (**Area 9**) and master bedroom (**Area 10**).

- The bloody swath along the wall terminates at the bookcase. If characters examine it, a bloody handprint is found under a single, thick volume titled *The Cross Family History*. Characters searching the bookcase may make a DC 17 Intelligence check to uncover a secret compartment. If characters specifically state they are examining *The Cross Family History*, the act of pulling it from the shelf immediately reveals the secret compartment, as the book serves as the secret lever to open it.

The secret compartment contains a leather bag with 125 gp, Jedidiah's journal, the true deed to Bright House, and a bloodstained wedding band. Of these hidden treasures, Jedidiah's journal sheds the most light on what happened to the Cross family at Blight House (see **Examining Jedidiah's Journal** for details of this volume).

Attic

A trail of old, dried blood leads up into this spacious, one-room attic. The space is cluttered with the rotted remnants of old furniture, several open chests full of clothing, and children's toys scattered about the floor. A large window floods the attic with moonlight. A small table with a candelabra on it is before the window. A large, irregular stain can only be dried blood.



Examining Jedidiah's Journal

This old, leatherbound tome is weathered and worn, its pages yellowed and mold-stained from the effects of the haunting. Many of the pages are illegible, and those that can be read often only contain fragments of entries. Most of it is taken up with day-to-day life in a small town on the frontier of the hinterlands, along with family memories, bills of sale, and a general discussion of happenings in the family.

If characters flip closer to the end of Jedidiah's journal, they discover six entries of note:

Entry 1: "... in town continues to grow ever so dire ... in the house for three weeks and have not once crossed her threshold. My dearest Gwendoline cannot even look out the front window without becoming overwhelmingly distraught by the withering of her gardens."

"... starting to worry as well. Mother is aloof as always, rocking away in her room. She keeps asking when father will return. I wish I knew."

Entry 2: "Father came to me last night in quite a frantic state. He told me his mission had failed but he had one last ... sleeve to stop the Rot. ... headed to the old bridge to ... must stay in their beds until sunrise. 'Soil them if you must' he said, 'but do not leave them.' "

Entry 3: "... there was a loud crash and I ... cornered ... as they chanted in unison ... lunged forward he threw his journal into the hearth and dove out of the way ... unleashed the fires of the damned ... incinerating them ... breath, he said, 'It's too late, my son. I have failed you. ... I have failed us all. Hell has come to Fetterwald. Run.' "

Entry 4: "It has been several weeks since my last entry. Help never came but the night did and with it many horrors. ... The mystery illness had overtaken the children. Their loss was the final straw in the souring of the love between Gwendoline and I ...

... because I knew she would finally be reunited with the children. It was the last calm thing I shall ever know."

Entry 5: "Grandmother ... mourning ... acting strange since Gwendoline's passing. She stares out the window, hissing and growling ... the graves have been desecrated, the bodies taken ... only my father remains ... but we have no way to close the gateway he spoke of ... they come from the other side, more powerful each time ..."

Entry 6: "This is my last entry as I know I am within ... I know they will come again tonight ... My will to live ... only because ..., my sweet Gwendoline would have wanted ... one more day is too much to ask. Winterfyll approaches. I am going to the attic ... light our candle one last time in hopes my dying action shines a light ... or maybe the candle burns the house down and takes the rot with it. I am at peace with either."

The attic of Bright House was used for storage and as an occasional play area for the children. Trunks of clothing are tossed about, their contents clearly rifled through. An open chest of wooden toys once belonging to the Cross children is on its side, abandoned.

If characters enter the attic, they activate a benign haunting. Read or paraphrase the following:

Before you, spectral figures suddenly form out of thin air, lit by a ghastly pale light. With their backs to you, six masked, hooded figures clad in rags surround a tall man in a waistcoat and high boots, threatening him with long knives. He hacks away at them with a hand ax but is eventually overwhelmed and dragged to the floor. With a single, brutal cut, one of the masked figures retrieves the man's ax and quickly severs his head with the weapon. The masked figure holds the head aloft as the entire scene slowly fades away.

Characters searching the room may discover the following:

- ❧ Characters who investigated the manor and saw the portrait of the Cross family above the fireplace (**Area 7**) know that the man murdered by the masked figures was Jedidiah Cross. If characters previously spoke with Thurlan Yar and he gave them the *mask of fecundity*, they recognize it as the same sort of mask that Jedidiah's murderers were wearing in the haunting.
- ❧ The bloodstain on the floor is where the Heresy of Rot murdered Jedidiah Cross. A casual examination reveals a single matchstick, unlit and unbroken, that has adhered to the stain.
- ❧ The silver candelabra holds a single candle and is worth 8 gp. If lit, the entire window glows with a feeling of warmth and welcome, bathing the characters in the first pleasant sensations they have had since entering the manor. This effect immediately releases the souls of the Cross family and ends the haunting at Blight Manor. All supernatural effects related to the haunting are immediately dismissed and the corpses of the Cross family in the cellar (**Area 6**) are prevented from reanimating as rot zombies if they have not already been dispatched. The character who lights the candle is granted 10 temporary hit points for the duration of the adventure, gains Advantage on their next three attack rolls, ability checks, or saving throws within the next day and dismisses any bad omens they may have accumulated.

Part 4.

The Lonely Grave of Doctor Coffin

This small family plot consists of a few dozen gravestones, all in various stages of weatherbeaten disrepair. In many cases, the names of those lying beneath have eroded into nothingness. A single grave stands out among the rest, easily four times the size of the others and cut into an unusual pattern: a witchboard! It reads "Doctor Isaac Cross — Father, Husband, Practitioner of Medicine, Mortician." Mounds of old dirt are scattered about, the result of several adjacent graves having been crudely unearthed.

This is the Cross family burial plot and final resting place of Isaac Cross, the notorious "Doctor Coffin." In most respects, it looks just like any other small graveyard, but the looming presence of Isaac's witchboard-shaped tombstone casts a strange pall over the entire area.

Many of the graves were recently dug up and the bodies rudely excavated. The Heresy of Rot stole the remains of these unfortunate souls and took them to the Void Between to offer up as sustenance to the Rot King.

A search of the graveyard reveals the following:

- ☞ Characters examining the plot find that Doctor Cross' gravestone is unlike any other they have ever seen. Obviously fashioned by a skilled craftsman, the gravestone is expertly cut from a single piece of granite to resemble a large witchboard. The tombstone detects as magical.
- ☞ Doctor Cross' desiccated corpse reclines in a wooden coffin within the excavated grave beneath his grand-looking headstone; it is missing its left arm. Compared to the rest of the graveyard, his remains appear to be undisturbed. The coffin lid is flung to one side, and an old, dusty top hat sits atop the corpse's chest. This is a *hat of the medium*^{A1} and detects as magical. Additionally, a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that another item of value is in the grave: the corpse's right cufflink is intact and contains a single *bead of force*.
- ☞ Inspecting the coffin reveals a series of painted runes along the inside of the lid as well as within the coffin. Arcane spellcasters recognize these as the same sort of *magic circle* sigils found in several rooms within Blight House (see **Areas 9, 10, and 12**). The Heresy of Rot were unable to steal Isaac's remains thanks to the magical precautions he placed in his coffin before he perished.

☞ Doctor Cross' headstone is, in truth, a complex magical gateway. If the characters discovered the *bone planchette of Doctor Cross*^{A1}, they feel a slight tug on the planchette toward the headstone. They may attempt to use the planchette with the witchboard on the headstone as they would with a traditional spirit board.

By spelling out the words "Winterfyll Veniens Ignis" with the planchette, the characters can successfully open a magical portal to the Void Between. Clues found in Blight Manor should help the players with this mystery. The words are found in the library/parlor (**Area 7**), the children's bedroom (**Area 9**), and the master bedroom (**Area 10**). The phrase translates (from Latin) to "Winterfyll Coming Fire." Spelling out the phrase with the planchette calls out to the spirit of Isaac Cross, whose spectral form rises from his grave to speak with the characters.

Walking into the portal transports characters to the Void Between in the blink of an eye. The portal closes behind them.

If the characters use the *bone planchette of Doctor Coffin*^{A1} to open the gateway to the Void Between, read or paraphrase the following:

A chill breeze whips through the graveyard as the clouds above rumble and darken, sending dust and bits of cornstalks into the air. Suddenly, a brilliant flash of lightning strikes Isaac's grave and sparks fly in every direction. The grave emits an eerie, sickly green glow, and the ground beneath your feet slowly begins to shake.

A gaunt, translucent figure lit with a pale green, umbral light floats upward from Isaac's coffin. Clad in a long waistcoat and top hat, his visage matches that of the tall man seen in the portrait above the fireplace at Blight House. The spectral figure takes off his top hat to reveal a wrinkled, balding pate. He looks down upon you for a long moment.

Finally, he speaks in a raspy but well-educated voice, "I cannot thank you enough for making it this far, where I have failed. You are Fetterwald's last hope of halting the rot before it consumes our world. Put an end to this madness before it is too late!"

With that final utterance, the spirit calls out, "Beware ... whistling ..." Then it is abruptly cut off. The spirit's form erupts in green flames, leaving behind an open, waiting portal ...

If characters fail to open the portal to the Void Between, they instead summon a **tombstone elemental**^{A2} that serves as the gateway's guardian. The elemental is tied to the headstone and attacks all living creatures in the graveyard. The creature is also called should the characters attempt to destroy the grave or its headstone. However, if this guardian is slain, the portal still opens, and characters may step through to the great beyond of the Void Between.



The Void Between

A strange demi-plane existing in conjunction and parallel to Fetterwalk and the world of the characters, it mirrors many of the same qualities and features. While it seemingly contains all the same aspects and locations of its twin, the Void Between is a much darker place. Characters see the same farmhouses and landmarks in the distance, but everything appears to be rotted or collapsed in decay.

An omnipresent fog of decay hangs in the air, and strange spores drift about. Entire forests are shot through with rot, and grotesque fruiting bodies fill the fields where crops should be growing. Everything seems to be on the verge of ruin and collapse. The landscape is devoid of normal life, though strange creatures native to the demi-plane exist, creeping just beyond the characters' sight.

When characters first enter the Void Between, an overbearing stench of rot and decay threatens to

overwhelm them, but as they breathe in the spores filling the air, the odor suddenly doesn't seem so bad.

While these microorganisms are essentially harmless, they allow newcomers to breathe and act normally while visiting the Void Between.

The Rot King exists within this portion of the Void Between, where it is served by its many horrific minions and the Heresy of Rot. The Rot King and the Void Between are inexorably tied together, so much so that if one were to perish, so too would the other. As each grows in strength, the other becomes able to enforce its will on the normal world. This is why Fetterwald has seen so many strange occurrences and disappearances over the last year. The time has almost come for the Rot King to emerge and fully spread its scabrous, rotting taint to the mortal world.

Part 5.

A Nightmare Come to Life



As you step through the portal, you find yourselves in a strange place eerily reminiscent of the one you just left. While it has the general appearance of the cornfields and roads outside of Fetterwald, the sky is darkened by a perpetual dusk that leaves everything lit in an endless half-light. Vast cornfields shot through with rot and decay stretch in every direction, and tiny bits of flotsam drift through the air like ash raining down from above. Bulbous fruiting bodies of an unknown nature grow wild along the roadside, swollen and rotting.

As the characters get their bearings, a loud squelching sound ripples across the road as two of the fruiting bodies split open with a hiss, sending a haze of spores upward. When this occurs, a 10-foot-wide section of the cornfield immediately snaps and cracks, bending at odd angles and parting to reveal a well-beaten dirt path beyond. This path leads to the Whispering Cornfield.

Characters investigating the path notice a multitude of bare-foot, human-shaped tracks alongside a set of larger, unidentifiable tracks. While no check is needed to notice these tracks, no amount of observation can determine what creature made the larger tracks.

The Whispering Cornfield

So named for the susurrus of whispers heard on the breeze as one makes their way through it, the Whispering Cornfield is an especially dangerous environment. Grown wild and rampant but half-rotted from the strange atmosphere of the Void Between, the stalks from this cornfield seem to stretch on forever. They limit vision to a mere 10 feet ahead and unless a character rises above 10 feet in height, they cannot see farther. Even then, the Whispering Cornfield appears to stretch on infinitely ... even from the direction the characters just arrived!

Properties of the Whispering Cornfield

- While the Whispering Cornfield is itself not sentient nor alive in a monstrous fashion, like everything else in the Void Between, it is an extension of the Rot King. This means that the cornfield serves as the Rot King's eyes and ears while the characters remain inside of it. Thus, the Rot King knows when characters move through the cornfield and are alerted as they draw near.
- It is very easy to get lost within the Whispering Cornfield should the characters leave the path and hack their way through the rotting cornstalks. Characters who do this must make a DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check. Success allows them to recognize they are in peril of becoming disoriented and lost, while failure indicates they have indeed become lost in the stalks. A second successful Survival check allows characters to return to the path. However, if the Survival check is failed three times in a row, the characters are lost in the Whispering Cornfield forever!
- As a realm of spoil and decay, healing magics are greatly diminished in the Void Between. Any such spell cast within the Whispering Cornfield thus operates at only half its typical effectiveness. For example, should a cleric cast *cure wounds* upon a comrade and heal 8 points of damage, the actual amount healed is only 4 points. This effect extends to the Rot King and its minions as well. This deleterious effect has no effect on healing magic with other effects, such as *protection from poison* or *lesser restoration*. These spells and effects remain unaffected.
- The path through the cornfield can be as long or short as you need to build an appropriate amount of tension between the characters and their claustrophobic environment.

As characters make their way down the dirt path through the Whispering Cornfield, they occasionally come across more of the bizarre fruiting bodies they saw earlier along the roadside. If approached, these bulbous, pumpkin-like polyps of fungus split open with a disgusting squelch and send tiny, foul-smelling spores into the air. These spores are harmless and have no effect other than to leave the characters a bit shaken.

In addition, pumpkin-headed scarecrows appear along the path as characters delve deeper into the cornfield. If examined, these scarecrows are revealed to be the rotting remains of Fetterwald townsfolk. Each has a pumpkin-like gourd positioned over their head. Characters who spent some time in town might even recognize someone! The scarecrows possess nothing of value and are completely non-monstrous, serving only as reminders of the Heresy of Rot's vile nature.

Eventually, the characters detect something moving in the cornfield, its presence given away by the swaying and cracking of cornstalks. Shortly thereafter, a slight whistling tune carried on the wind is heard, although it seemingly comes from no particular direction. The happy tune seems somewhat familiar and grows louder as each minute passes. Finally, an observant character may notice a bulbous, pumpkin-like head bobbing among the tops of the cornstalks before it dips back below. The head appears almost identical to the curious fruiting bodies scattered about the roadside and cornfield. This creature is known as **Whistling Jack**^{A2}, and it bursts from the cornfield to attack after you feel the appropriate amount of tension has built up.

Whistling Jack is a terrifying, monstrous apparition standing a full 15 feet tall, though its bent back reduces it to a mere 10 feet in height. Its limbs are unnaturally long, with each arm ending in wicked-looking bone claws. The creature carries a long scythe that it swings in predictable grim reaper fashion. Atop its shoulders sits a bloated, pumpkin-like gourd lit with an inner fire, upon which a caricature of a smiling, jack-o'-lantern-like face can be seen. It never ceases to whistle, even when wounded. The tune fades only if it is destroyed, as the light leaves its flickering yellow eyes.

Whistling Jack swings its scythe in long, deadly arcs. If disarmed, it attacks with its long, bony claws. It fights until destroyed.

If Whistling Jack proves to be not much of a challenge, it can optionally be accompanied by 1d4 + 2 **Heresy of Rot cultists**^{A2} or **pumpkinhead creepers**^{A2} at your discretion.



Part 6.

The Fate of Fetterwald Unfolds

The characters' encounter with Whistling Jack was only the beginning, as the truth about what has been plaguing Fetterwald lies just beyond. Read or paraphrase the following when you are ready for the characters to encounter the Heresy of Rot and the Rot King:

An odor of decay is heavy in the air, and the ground beneath your feet feels softer than before. Just ahead, you overhear a horrid chant. The endless rows of cornstalks give way to a clearing, upon which a dreadful scene is unfolding. A large, plump, plant-like creature reminiscent of the bloated gourds and ripened fruit along the roadside glares at you with nearly a dozen smoldering red eyes. From its giant mass, dozens of vine-like tendrils snake outward, some writhing about on their own accord along the ground while others are firmly planted into the soil around it. Prostrate before this terrible creature, several humanoid figures in strange masks bow, scrape, and chant, intoning a sorrowful dirge.

This horrible being is the **Rot King**^{A2}, the creature responsible for the decimation of Fetterwald. The last remaining cult members are flocking to their master as the hour grows nigh; Winterfyll approaches, and the wall between worlds is at its thinnest. The Rot King's tendrils are planted in the ground so it can feed off the remains of Fetterwald's citizens, who are slowly being transformed into **pumpkinhead creepers**^{A2}. The Rot King has grown fat and strong on the folk of Fetterwald, and it wants nothing more than to draw the entire town into its awful demi-plane so it can consume them all.

If characters approach the clearing, the creature's eyes grow wide and it lets out a shrill, deafening bellow. The Heresy of Rot cultists cease their chant and rush forward to defend their master. There are 1d4 **skull cultists**^{A2}, 1d2 **hag cultists**^{A2}, and a single **pumpkin cultist**^{A2}. In addition, the Rot King simultaneously yanks 1d3 **pumpkinhead creepers**^{A2} from the ground around it. These creatures immediately disconnect from the Rot King's tendrils and attack on the following round.





The assorted cultists use a mixture of physical attacks and spells, according to their ability. The pumpkinhead creepers attack mindlessly, their only prerogative being to defend their master. The Rot King uses up to three of its magical eye rays at once, along with two physical attacks from its tendrils. It may also use lair actions, depending on the circumstances.

If the Rot King is destroyed: Any remaining pumpkinhead creepers immediately wither, collapsing to the ground motionless. The remaining cultists attack in a mindless rage at the sight of their god's death. Most importantly, the Void Between begins to deteriorate and collapse as the cornfield around the characters rapidly rots before their eyes. The clouds above roil, and thunder cracks overhead. The Void Between fades away forever 1d3 + 2 minutes later, and characters find themselves standing at the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin (see **Part 4**). The witchboard headstone is now cracked in two. A slight haze of spores briefly blows away on the wind. No sign of the other realm remains.

If the Rot King defeats the characters: The Rot King sinks its tendrils into the characters, plants their bodies in the ground around it, and eventually transforms them into powerful servants like the Horseman and Whistling Jack. When the hour is nigh and Wynterfell arrives, the Void Between merges with Fetterwald and its surrounding lands, becoming a rotting realm of ash-filled skies and supernatural decay. The people of Fetterwald quickly fall, and all sentient life in the town is consumed.

This may be the end of the Lost Lands as we know it! Only time will tell ...

Consequences and Further Adventure

Heresy of Rot offers several possibilities after the adventure concludes.

It Feeds ... It Lives! Like any parasitic lifeform, the Rot King could have a backup plan at your discretion. One of the *masks of fecundity* could act as a seedling of sorts, corrupting anyone who wears it over time, until it transforms them into an all-new Rot King. What did you expect from a parasitic fungal mask from another dimension?

Nothing's Ever Really Gone: While the threat to Fetterwald may have passed, you could decide that the Void Between

wasn't really destroyed. Perhaps it lurks somewhere in the outer dark, waiting to be discovered again?

A Rot from Within: One or more of the townsfolk of Fetterwald may have been secret allies with the Heresy of Rot ... or even members! They lie low while the characters stick around but renew their efforts once they leave. The Heresy of Rot may even become a permanent fixture in your ongoing games.



Appendix 1: Magical Items

The Bone Planchette of Doctor Coffin

Wondrous item, uncommon

Fashioned from human bone and stylishly inlaid with ivory, this triangular planchette is nearly identical to the kind used on spirit boards. It is lightweight and has a slight chill about it when held.

While useful as the principal means of entering the Void Between in conjunction with Doctor Coffin's witchboard headstone, the planchette also confers a +1 bonus to all saving throws against the supernatural powers, magic, or abilities of undead creatures.

Harvester of Sorrow

*Weapon (handaxe), very rare
(requires attunement)*

This magical +2 *handaxe* is exquisitely crafted, with an ironwood handle fitted to a polished steel ax-head. This was Jedidiah's personal weapon in life and was known simply as *harvester*.

You have a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this weapon. If you use this weapon to make a ranged attack, the weapon deals an additional 1d8 points of damage on a hit, or if the target is actively running away, 2d8 damage. Immediately after the attack, the weapon flies back to your hand.

Hat of the Medium

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

This grand-looking top hat is stylish and well-made, with a simple grinning skull pendant of silver affixed to its brow. It would be equally at home during a high-society event or amid a funeral procession.

You may converse with a corpse within 10 feet and compel it to answer any questions you pose, up to twice per day. This ability functions as a *speak with dead* spell and allows you to ask the corpse up to five questions before the effect ends. The *hat of the medium* may be used to speak with a particular corpse only once every 13 days.

Horseman's Signet Ring

Wondrous item, rare

While wearing this ring, you gain a +1 bonus to your armor class and to saving throws. In addition, you have advantage on all Intelligence (Animal Handling) checks made while dealing with horses and a +1 bonus to Charisma ability checks while mounted on a horse or similar steed.



Mask of Fecundity

*Wondrous item, rare
(requires attunement)*

These odd-looking masks are fashioned from large specimens of shelf fungus taken from the lair of the Rot King and then meticulously carved by the Heresy of Rot. They appear in three varieties and are worn according to the cultist's station.

When initially placed on your face, the mask adheres to your bare skin in a parasitic yet symbiotic fashion. A *mask of fecundity* sends tiny tendrils into your flesh to anchor itself to your face so it becomes part of you as time goes by. Once the mask adheres to your face, it permanently reduces your maximum hit points by one.

In return, a *mask of fecundity* offers different benefits depending on its type:

- 🦴 **Skull:** This mask grants you a +1 bonus to armor class and allows you to expel a fungal cloud breath weapon once per day. Each creature in a five-foot-wide by 10-foot-long cone takes 2d4 poison damage. When this effect is triggered, the mask's eyes roll over to a dead black color. The eyes and the power return each night at midnight. This is the most common mask worn by Heresy of Rot cultists.
- 👁️ **Hag:** This mask grants you a +1 bonus to armor class and allows you to breathe forth a cone of caustic acid in a five-foot-wide by 20-foot-long cone once per day. Each creature in the area takes 3d6 acid damage. When this effect is triggered, the mask's eyes are lit by a pale green witchlight. The eyes dim and the power returns each night at midnight. This mask is typically worn by higher-ranking members of the cult.
- 🎃 **Pumpkin:** This mask grants you a +2 bonus to armor class and saving throws. Once per day, you can breathe a cone of flame upon foes in a five-foot-wide by 30-foot-long cone. Each creature in the area takes 6d6 fire damage. When this effect is triggered, the mask's eyes light with flame like that of a jack-o'-lantern. The eyes dim and the power returns each night at midnight. This mask is the most-formidable type and often worn by the cult's leader.

Voluntarily wearing a *mask of fecundity* is a willful, evil act, and doing so shows obeisance to the Rot King.

Appendix 2: Monsters and Hazards

Pumpkin Cultist

Medium human, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (full fungal armor [as chainmail], *pumpkin mask of fecundity*)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +6, Cha +5

Skills History +5, Insight +5, Religion +5

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Divine Weapons. The pumpkin cultist's weapon attacks are magical. When the pumpkin cultist hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 2d8 necrotic damage (included below).

Spellcasting. The pumpkin cultist is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The pumpkin cultist has the following spells prepared: Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bless, detect evil and good, cure wounds, healing word, inflict wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *aid, silence, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic, mass healing word, spirit guardians*

4th level (1 slot): *freedom of movement*

Actions

Multiattack. The pumpkin cultist makes three Club attacks.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.



Heresy of Rot Cultist

Skull Cultist: neutral evil **cult fanatic** with AC 16 from *skull mask of fecundity* and fungal armor (as chain shirt).

Hag Cultist: As neutral evil **priest** with AC 14 from *hag mask of fecundity* and fungal armor (as chain shirt).

Horseman

Medium plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor and horseman's signet ring)

Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +8, Dex +7, Con +6, Int +1, Wis +2, Cha +3

Skills Athletics +7, Intimidation +9 (from horseman's signet ring)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands Common but can't speak

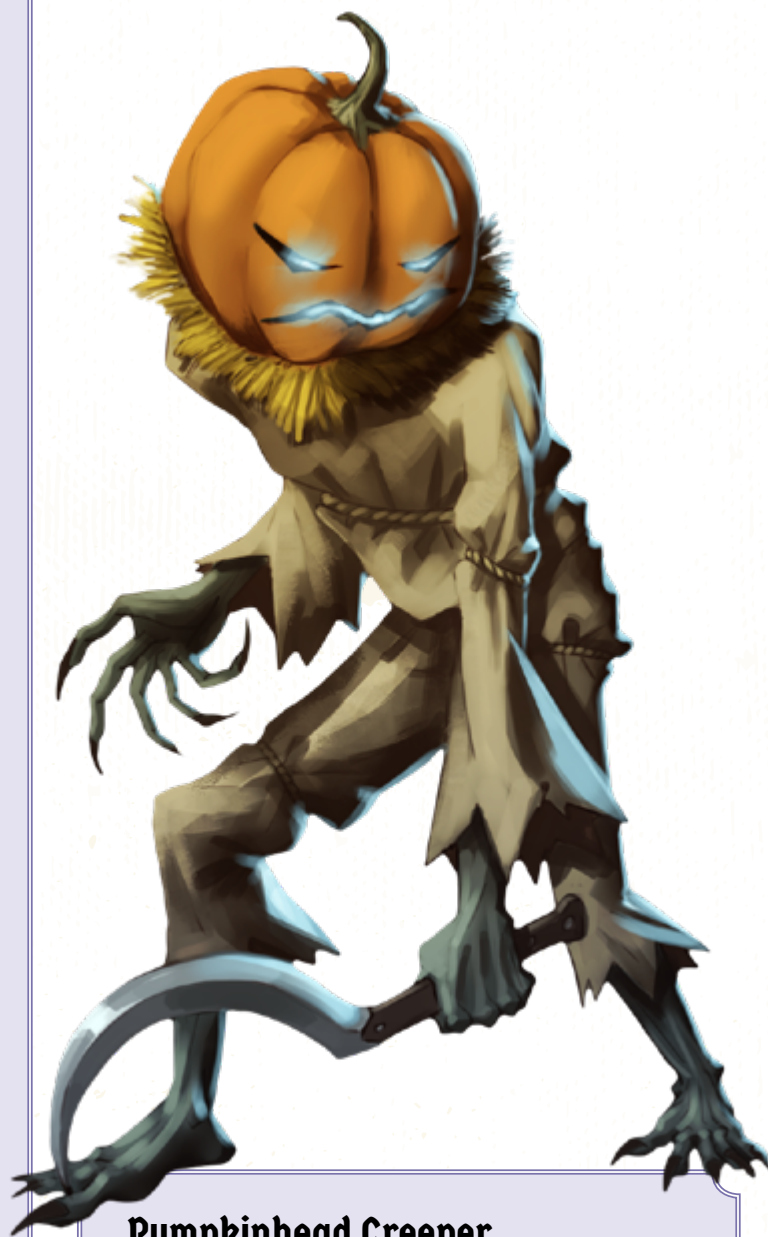
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Frightful Scream (recharge 4–6). As a bonus action, the horseman unleashes a disquieting scream (despite its lack of a head). Each creature within 40 feet that can hear it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened. A frightened creature moves away from the Horseman as quickly as it can, using its move and taking the Dash action. A frightened creature cannot make reactions or cast spells. A frightened creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a success.

Actions

Multiattack. The Horseman makes three Harvester of Sorrow attacks.

Harvester of Sorrow. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) slashing damage. If thrown against a frightened creature, the attack does an additional 4 (1d8) slashing damage.



Pumpkinhead Creeper

The pumpkinhead creeper uses the stat block of a **mold zombie** from *Kobold Press' Creature Codex*, available at <https://open5e.com/monsters/mold-zombie>, except its alignment is neutral.

Rot King

Large plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 48)

Speed 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone, unconscious

Senses blindsight 120 ft., tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Legendary Resistance. If the Rot King fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The Rot King makes three different Eye attacks and two Tendril attacks.

Tendril. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). While grappled, a creature takes 1d10 necrotic damage at the beginning of its turn and the Rot King gains that many hit points. If the Rot King kills a creature with its tendril, it may use a bonus action to bury the creature. A buried creature rises as a pumpkinhead creeper in 1d3 days if the Rot King lives. The Rot King has eight tendrils, and each one can grapple only one creature.

Eye Rays. The Rot King has 10 eye rays, each with its own effect, and can choose to use one of them:

- **Acid Arrow.** The Rot King makes two ranged weapon attacks at +6 to hit against one or two targets. On a hit, the target takes 14 (4d6) acid damage. Unless the target uses an action on its next turn to clean off the acid, the target takes 7 (2d6) acid damage at the end of its next turn.
- **Charm.** One creature within 60 feet must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed per the spell *charm person* or *charm monster*.
- **Confusion.** One creature within 60 feet must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be confused for one minute per the spell. A confused creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

- **Dispel Magic.** The Rot King attempts to dispel one spell or magical effect. Its spellcasting ability for this is Intelligence.
- **Fear.** One creature within 60 feet must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for one minute per the spell. A frightened creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.
- **Rotting Beam.** One creature within 60 feet must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) necrotic damage and succumbing to mummy rot on a failure, or taking half as much damage and not succumbing to disease on a success.
- **Ruinous Beam.** One creature within 60 feet must make a Dexterity saving throw. If it fails, any metal armor it is wearing takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to the AC it offers. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed.
- **Slow.** One target within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be slowed per the spell for one minute. A slowed creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.
- **Telekinesis.** The Rot King casts telekinesis on one creature or object using Intelligence as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14).
- **Withering Ray.** One creature within 60 feet must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) necrotic damage and aging 10 years on a failure, or taking half as much damage and not aging on a success.

Lair Actions

On initiative 20 (losing initiative ties), the Rot King takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the Rot King can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- **Exploding Gourds.** Rotting gourds around the Rot King explode in a 60-foot radius. All creatures in the area not native to the Void Between must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) necrotic damage and 21 (6d6) poison damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.
- **Entangling Vines.** Pumpkin vines burst forth from the ground in a 30-foot radius surrounding the Rot King. All creatures of the Rot King's choice must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be grappled (escape DC 14). A grappled creature takes 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns.
- **Call Forth Minions.** The Rot King causes 1d3 **pumpkinhead creepers** to erupt from the ground around it.



Rot Zombie

Medium undead, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	3 (–4)	6 (–2)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages any languages it knew in life

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the rot zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Rotting Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. The cursed target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum decreases by 10 (3d6) for every 24 hours that elapse. If the curse reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the *remove curse* spell or other magic.

Tombstone Elemental

Medium elemental, neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	5 (–3)	10 (+0)	5 (–3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Terran

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Earth Glide. The tombstone elemental can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the tombstone elemental doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Actions

Multiattack. The tombstone elemental makes two Slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Engulf (recharge 5–6). The tombstone elemental whirls around, sucking up dirt and headstones in a 20-foot-radius cloud. Each creature in the area must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage and is grappled (escape DC 15) by the giant cloud. A grappled creature takes 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of the elemental's turns. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw takes half the amount of damage and is pushed to the perimeter of the cloud. The elemental can maintain the cloud for as long as it wants, but while doing so, it can neither move nor make Slam attacks.



Umbral Steed

Large plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Damage Resistances piercing, psychic

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned, unconscious

Senses blindsight 20 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Trample. If the umbral steed moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a Slam attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the umbral steed can make one Stomp attack against it as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack. The umbral steed makes one Bite attack and one Kick attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Kick. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Stomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Spore Cloud (recharge 4–6). The umbral mount emits rotting spores in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. Those who fail take 17 (4d6) poison damage and are poisoned for one minute. Those who succeed take half this damage and are not poisoned.



Whistling Jack

Large plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)	8 (–1)

Skills Perception +1

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Whistler. A creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of Whistling Jack or comes within that distance for the first time on its turn that can hear it must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature has disadvantage on attack rolls until the beginning of its next turn.

Actions

Multiattack. Whistling Jack makes two Sickles attacks.

Sickle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Witchlight Seeker

Tiny plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 55 (10d4 + 30)

Speed fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The witchlight seeker makes three Eye Rays attacks.

Eye Rays. The witchlight seeker has five eye rays, each with its own effect, and it randomly uses one of them:



Acid Arrow. The witchlight seeker makes one ranged weapon attack at +5 to hit against a target within 60 feet. On a hit, the target takes 14 (4d6) acid damage. Unless the target uses an action on its next turn to clean off the acid, the target takes 7 (2d6) acid damage at the end of its next turn.



Magic Missile. Four *magic missiles* target a single creature within 60 feet. Each does 3 (1d4 + 1) force damage.



Slow. One creature within 60 feet must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be slowed for one minute per the spell. A slowed creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.



Dispel Magic. The witchlight seeker attempts to dispel one spell or magical effect. Its spellcasting ability for this is Wisdom.



Web. The witchlight seeker sends a web out over a single Large or smaller creature within 60 feet. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained for as long as it remains in the webs or until it breaks free. A creature restrained by the webs can use its action to make a DC 14 Strength check. If it succeeds, it is no longer restrained. The webs are flammable. Any five-foot cube of webs exposed to fire burns away in one round, dealing 2d4 fire damage to any creature that starts its turn in the fire.

Product Identity: The following items are hereby identified as Frog God Games LLC's Product Identity, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Game Content: product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures; characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity. Previously released Open Game Content is excluded from the above list.

Notice of Open Game Content: This product contains Open Game Content, as defined in the Open Game License, below. Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of the Open Game License.

Designation of Open Game Content: Subject to the Product Identity Designation herein, the following material is designated as Open Game Content. (1) all monster statistics, descriptions of special abilities, and sentences including game mechanics such as die rolls, probabilities, and/or other material required to be open game content as part of the game rules, or previously released as Open Game Content, (2) all portions of spell descriptions that include rules-specific definitions of the effect of the spells, and all material previously released as Open Game Content, (3) all other descriptions of game-rule effects specifying die rolls or other mechanic features of the game, whether in traps, magic items, hazards, or anywhere else in the text, (4) all previously released Open Game Content, material required to be Open Game Content under the terms of the Open Game License, and public domain material anywhere in the text.

Use of Content from Tome of Horrors Complete: This product contains or references content from the Tome of Horrors Complete and/or other monster Tomes by Frog God Games. Such content is used by permission and an abbreviated Section 15 entry has been approved. Citation to monsters from the Tome of Horrors Complete or other monster Tomes must be done by citation to that original work.

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgement, or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed, or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit, or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes, and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity; (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos, and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures and characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes, and graphic, photographic, and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses, and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magic or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor; (g) "Use", "Used", or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate, and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content; (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying, or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title, and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content, You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify, and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contribute Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provisions of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document 5.0 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Heresy of Rot, Copyright 2022, Necromancer Games; Authors Levi Combs and John McGuire.

Greetings children of the grave... and happy Frog-O-Weeeeen!! It is I, your host and guide into the unknown... SAM HAIN! Won't you join me?



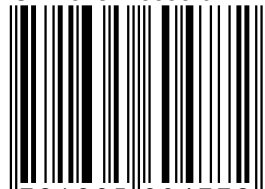
Tonight's entry into the unknown brings you a tale of woe from the Wilderland's frontier! A shadowy cult preys on the folk of the unsuspecting town of Fetterwald, as a supernatural terror stalks the cornfields. And what lies within the lonely grave of Doctor Coffin?! A ruined manse holds a dark secret while a horror beyond imagining wakes in a nightmarish dream world. Will your characters be too late to stop it?

Now lie back in your coffins and enjoy a sip of this frogalicious witch's brew; it's sure to absolutely petrify your nerves!

PARTY SIZE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+
PARTY LEVEL	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-19	20	
PLAY EMPHASIS	40% COMBAT			5% SOCIAL	50% EXPLORATION			5% TRAPS
GM PREPARATION	LOW			MEDIUM			HIGH	
DIFFICULTY TO RUN	EASY			MEDIUM			HARD	
PLAY TIME	1H	4-6 HOURS			4000+H			

Heresy of Rot – 5e PDF

ISBN 978-1-6656-0477-2



9 781665 604772